Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Plan - State of Louisiana

Restoration Plan Database:
Crystal Reports of Individual Plan Summaries

I. BASIC PLAN DATA

Plan name:

Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Plan - State of Louisiana

Brief description of plan:

The plan addresses coastal ecosystem problems from both short- and long-range perspectives, incorporates structural management and institutional components, and includes 1) a list of projects and programs required for the conservation and restoration of coastal wetland systems, 2) a schedule and estimated cost for the implementation of each project or program included, 3) rationale for incorporation of each project or program and 4) public use benefits.

Region the plan is located within:

Gulf of Mexico Region

Watershed(s) included within the plan:

G170a , G170b , G180x , G190x , G193x , G195x , G200x , G205x , G210x , G215x , G220x , G222x , G223x , G226x , G230x , G235x , G240x , G245x , G250x

Area plan covers (in square miles):

square miles

Plan scale:

State

Plan’s lead organization(s):

Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Authority

Plan’s Main Contact Information:

Len Bahr
Executive Assistant of Coastal Activities
Office of the Governor

www.goca.state.la.us/CoastalLinks-Home.html

On-line version of plan:

www.goca.state.la.us/SWA-Reports.html

Date of original plan:

4/2000

II. TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Plan includes restoration goals: Y

Level of detail of the goals:

G

Summary of the goals:

Goal 1-Assure vertical accumulation to achieve sustainability. Goal 2-Maintain estuarine gradient to achieve diversity. Goal 3-Maintain exchange and interface to achieve system linkages.

Plan recommends or uses criteria for selecting restoration sites (e.g. cost benefit ratio, ecological benefits):

Y

Summary of the criteria:

Adopting the pay-as-you-go cash management system set the stage for a redesign of the project selection process. The new priority projects were selected by a process transitional between the old method and a new process that requires candidate projects to be justified in terms of implementing specific strategies identified in Coast 2050. Thus, proposed projects will be ranked by functional priorities, rather than solely on cost-based criteria.

Plan recommends restoration of specific project sites:

Y

Plan includes a discussion of funding sources:

Y

Plan addresses long-term protection of restored sites:

N

Partners included in developing the plan:

Federal
State

Type(s) of public outreach included during plan development:

Information not available

Plan includes public outreach as part of plan implementation (e.g. annual public meeting, local group participation):

N

Plan discusses the application of innovative approaches to restoration:

N

Plan make use of GIS mapping capabilities:

N

Plan addresses monitoring/reference sites for ecosystem level monitoring (baseline conditions) by:

N

Plan addresses monitoring/reference sites for project level monitoring by:

N

The plan discusses or coordinates with other restoration plans covering the same geographic area:

N

Other plan names:

Plan contains detailed information on historic and/or current habitat size, rate of loss, acres restored or protected, etc.):

Y

Summary of this habitat information:

Since the 1930's, more than one million acres have disappeared. Another 24 to 35 square miles are currently being lost every year on average. The reasons that marshes change to open water and barrier islands fragment and disappear are complex and variable across the coast, however the principal reason is that the Mississippi River has been artificially isolated from the broad delta system that it created during the past 6,000 years. In addition to river levees that have prevented the annual overbank floods that formerly nourished delta wetlands, navigation channels have allowed saline water into former freshwater areas, and canals with spoil banks have replaced marsh and blocked the natural patterns of hydrology. Meanwhile, the entire delta system is sinking with respect to sea level as old sediments compact under their own weight and sea level continues to rise. Subsidence and the impact of Gulf storm events combine with man-made hydrologic changes at large and small scales to produce an ecosystem on the verge of collapse. This imminent collapse threatens the continued productivity of Louisiana's bountiful coastal ecosytems, the economic viability of its industries and the safety of its residents. Current restoration efforts are out of scale with the magnitude of the problem. Unless more drastic action is taken, coastal Louisiana will lose nearly 640,000 more acres of coastal marshes, swamps and barrier islands by the year 2050. As the coast turns into open water, we lose the various functions and values associated with coastal wetlands-nursery grounds for most commercial and recreational fisheries and wildlife in the Gulf of Mexico, vital habitat for birds, furbearers and alligators, water quality improvement, flood water storage, buffering from storm surge, eco-tourism, and the intangible cultural value of land settled centuries ago and passed down through generations.